as we did in the last calamity—by a shuddering breadth.

I regret more than words can express the necessity for telling the bare facts of our bloodstained stagger tt> victpry. But I had to tell them or leave unchallenged the supremacy of misleading and therefore dangerous illusions.

I have written of men and events as I saw and thought of them. That may involve criticism where others migl^t praise and commendation where others might attach blame. Where I have indulged in any stricture, I have taken the utmost pains to test the accuracy of my recollection by reference to contemporary documents. I have also consulted men who took an active part in episodes I record. But the pathways and boundaries of memory are so obliterated and confused by time, that the most reliable witness often strays, unless the road is marked out with the " writing that remains." Luckily, I have in my possession—thanks to careful secretaries—a vast number of memoranda, minutes and letters concerning the War and Peace, all written at the time.

The only value which these volumes may possess for the future historian of war will depend upon the memories being genuine and upon the extent to which they are fortified by documentary or other contemporary evidence.

Unfortunately, censure attracts more attention than laudation. I have criticised a few—

very few—statesmen and generals. That attracts controversy, and controversy involves a publicity which casts the larger and more important part of the narrative into the shade. If in these pages I have resorted to criticism, I have also recalled with pleasure the great